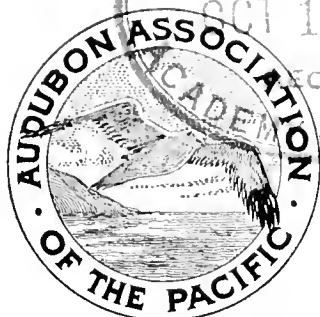


# THE

MONTHLY



# GULL

BULLETIN

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**NOVEMBER MEETING:** The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 10th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Assembly Hall of the Public Library, corner McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Mrs. Amelia S. Allen, Secretary of the Cooper Ornithological Club, will deliver an address on "Some Birds of the Santa Cruz Mountains." Visitors will be welcomed.

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**NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP** will be taken on Sunday, November 13th, to the University Campus, Berkeley. San Francisco members take 8:40 a. m. Key Route boat, transfer to "Berkeley" train at mole and ride to end of line at University and Shattuck Avenues, where party will form upon arrival of train at 9:20 a. m. East Bay members may reach this point by either College, Telegraph, Shattuck, or Grove cars. Bring lunch and canteens. Leader, Miss S. E. King.

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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE OCTOBER MEETING:** The fifty-seventh regular meeting of the Association was held on October 13th, in the Assembly Hall of the San Francisco Public Library, with President Kibbe in the chair; Mrs. Carl R. Smith, Acting Secretary; thirty-four members and guests present.

Through the courtesy of the Board of Library Trustees, and as well, the kindly interest of Secretary Robert Ray, of that body, the opportunity has been presented to the Association, of holding its meetings regularly in the Assembly Hall of the Library and the meeting unanimously approved a motion that this program be adopted. Dr. Evermann announced that the California Academy of Sciences had effected a similar arrangement and would hereafter meet here.

Mr. Tracy I. Storer, Honorary Member of the Association, then entertained the meeting with a most interesting account of a trip taken in August last, by ordinary means of transportation, to Donner Lake, Truckee, Lake Tahoe, Fallen Leaf Lake and Glen Alpine, where a burro was secured and the journey continued on foot to Desolation Valley, Ralston and the highway; here the burro was dismissed and the trip out finished by automobile.

Reference was made to differences in demarkation and distribution of life zones to be observed on the two slopes of the Sierra. On the west, they are well defined and orderly, while on the east, they are somewhat mixed up and birds characteristic of different zones are found mingled.

As might have been anticipated, the number of species observed was only about one-half of that which would have been encountered in the height of the breeding season, and the list reached only forty-two

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At Donner Lake, the notable birds were olive-sided flycatchers, wood pewees and blue-fronted jays. Strange to say, Truckee was the only place where mountain bluebirds were encountered. California gulls were met on Lake Tahoe.

At Fallen Leaf, four flycatchers were observed: olive-sided, wood pewees, Traill and probably Wright. Each species had its own foraging area free from competition with the others. The olive-sided kept forty feet or more above ground; the pewees, between the ground and this elevation, on the edges of clearings; the Wright, in woods and chaparral and the Traill down in the alders and willows along streams. Few nests were identified, but a very remarkable instance of protective aspect was observed in a pewee's nest which had been built of lichens on one of a bunch of dead trees. When the eye was turned away from this nest, it was well nigh impossible to find it again, as the lichens matched the tree bark perfectly and the nest was absolutely disguised. Various families of blue-fronted jays furnished interesting psychological studies and on one evening numbers of nighthawks and bats were observed.

Like the other birds, the robins were quiet, having stopped singing toward the end of July, and they were enjoying the manzanita berries which were commencing to ripen. Porcupines had been feeding on Jeffrey pines and white fir and a dozen of such trees were found with bark peeled from the top down. Chickarees were found in numbers, eating the tamrac pine nuts from the cones in the trees, but the large Jeffrey cones were cut off, green, and stripped of their nuts on the ground. Comment upon the hazard of sitting under a Jeffrey pine while such operation was going on elicited the fact that one man has been recorded as killed by being hit upon the head by such a cone.

Clark crows were numerous, having descended, as usual, to the Jeffrey pine belt in July. Their breeding habits, however, are little known, as they are among the earliest nesters and do not come below the mountain hemlock belt until their family duties are completed for the season. Of all birds, the little juncos were most numerous, and were found moving up into the higher altitudes in this period. Two adults were found sharing the responsibility of feeding their young.

Mr. Storer's address held the attention of all hearers and awoke many happy memories for such of his audience as had been fortunate enough to enjoy similar experiences in the same district.

Following the adjournment of the meeting, the Board of Directors elected Miss Frances Fritts, Berkeley, to membership.



### SAVE NOW, OR LOSE FOREVER

The Audubon Society of New Hampshire makes one more of the Audubon group to issue a periodical Bulletin, which in this instance will appear quarterly, making a total yearly issue comparable in size with the GULL.

The current number puts forth a strong plea for the multiplication of bird sanctuaries, not on sentimental grounds, but based purely upon economic necessity. Many pertinent data are cited to demonstrate that the trees of our forests need the birds even more than the birds need the trees. This matter of *inter-dependence* of plant growths and birds upon each other is one which escapes the notice of most people and the most serious task confronting Audubon Societies today is to bring this point home to every community and every family and to every individual.

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The ordinary, everyday man is disposed to think of the "balance of Nature" as a phrase coined by highbrows to describe something as vague or undemonstrable as the nebular hypothesis. He sees a bird spoiling a few cherries and he forthwith gives his son an air-gun to destroy the bird without a thought of the myriad insects which will be spared to life by the death of the bird. He has visualized the loss of the cherries, but he will never know the damage done by the insects which this bird would have disposed of.

One paragraph in an article on "The Birds and Our Forests" is especially striking:

"Man can protect his orchards and city shade trees to some extent by the expensive process of spraying, but when it comes to all the trees in all the woods, he is powerless. We see his helplessness in the case of fungi diseases, as the chestnut blight. In spite of all the experts could do, they found no means to check it and our supply of that wood, an estimated destruction of over \$300,000,000 worth by this disease, is practically gone. In regard to the white pine blister rust, we are more fortunate in that its control can probably be accomplished by the eradication of currant and gooseberry bushes, both wild and cultivated, the carriers of that disease. But even by this method, *it has cost over \$100,000 within the last four years to cover 457.389 acres in New Hampshire*, by crews of men under Federal and State supervision, and our State Forestry Department estimates that it will take eight or nine years more to complete the work. So we can easily appreciate the impossibility of man's efforts being able to check insect depredations in our forests."

The italics are ours, and the figures afford us a crude basis for conceiving the expenditure involved in fighting any disease or insect pest which might obtain a foothold in our vast California forests, or even in insignificant areas here or there. We have our own troubles, although they are revealed to a small proportion of us. Like a creeping paralysis, there is a blight draining the life from the tamrac (lodgepole) pines in certain districts of the Sierra. Along its bottom and in its upper reaches, the beautiful Matterhorn Canyon is devastated. The Tuolumne meadows are bordered on the southerly side by a wide zone of dead and dying tamracs. It seems that there are bark borers living on these trees, but the trees can resist them sufficiently to survive. Also there are borers which enter the ends of the needles and destroy them. Working alone, these cannot prevail against the trees. But in certain areas, these two pests have made a concerted attack against the tamracs, and it has spelt doom for the trees. To venture a paraphrase, how happy could they be with either, were t'other rank nuisance away!

The cycles of Nature are vast; the life of man, short. Everything he requires, save air and water, is limited and measured out to him, but he is only now beginning to concern himself with the diminutions which have resulted from his own recklessness and waste. In so far as living organisms are involved in these problems, future generations will be fortunate indeed if they progress rapidly enough in knowledge and intelligence to identify the inter-relations of living things in time to preserve those forms which are essential to their own well-being. Up to the beginning of the present century, we have fatuously confined our researches to the discovery of substitutes for what we have wantonly destroyed or carelessly ignored. While our country was sparsely inhabited, and while enormous areas were left, wherein the unbalancing influence of man had not yet been felt, there was always the consolation of unmeasured abundance upon which to draw. This is true no longer. We of this generation have enjoyed many things which will be denied to the next one. Turning to the examples cited above, enormous areas of Chestnut have disappeared. The white pine is attacked by a rust which we think we can control by destroying two other useful growths, albeit at inordinate cost of time and money. No offset has yet been found for the depredations of the borers which are slowly, but certainly, eradicating the

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tamracs in the Sierra. The questions we must face, are: What will come next? When shall we recognize its occurrence? How long will it take to discover the cure? Shall we be able to apply the remedy?

The outstanding facts are these: We all know where we are but none may claim to know where he is going. Even though it be hard to abide the ills we know, we can at least try to avoid rushing into those of which we wot not. Within the province of the Audubon Societies, we have ample evidence of the value of those of Nature's creatures whose conservation we are advocating, and no one can say what may be the result if our useful birds are permitted to be destroyed. But we may not rest with merely stating this, nor be satisfied with proving it, but we must stay with our problem, force it upon the attention of all who are ignorant of it, and see that those who once learn of it, do not lose sight of it.

A. S. KIBBE.

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**OCTOBER FIELD TRIP** was taken to Lake Merced on the 16th. This was a red-letter day for members and guests who have not visited the interior lakes where the Western grebes nest. All summer from one to three of these birds have been seen at the northern end of the west lake. Tules are thickest at this particular place and extend quite a distance from shore. Evidently a nest and young have been concealed there all summer. This day we found within the limits of San Francisco, a Western grebe feeding a husky youngster, soft gray and white, with a loud voice and a very large appetite. It would be interesting to know if members who go often to the lake have seen more than one chick and when this one first appeared in public.

Our list for the day was fairly good. Several tule wrens were seen and one which carefully remained out of sight sang as joyously as in June. This species and a friendly winter wren in a woodpile were birds not seen last year at this time. Birds seen at the lake were Western, Holboell, eared and pied-billed grebes; common loon, Western, California and Bonaparte gulls; Farallon cormorant; Mallard, lesser scaup, white-winged scoter and ruddy ducks; great blue heron, coot, Northern phalarope and killdeer; California quail, sparrow hawk, belted kingfisher, flicker, Anna hummingbird; Say and black phoebe; Western meadow lark and Brewer blackbird; Nuttall sparrow, song sparrow and San Francisco towhee; California shrike; salt marsh yellow throat; Vigors, tule and winter wrens; chickadee and bushtits.

Three members loitered after the main party had left and these were rewarded by the sight of possibly five hundred red-winged blackbirds coming into the tules on the first lake to roost, several black-crowned night herons and a Virginia rail.

With the addition of sandpipers and a Heermann gull observed on the way across the bay, the number of species reaches forty-one.

Members present were Mesdames Kelly and Warrington; Misses Ames, Ayer, Baily, Chapin, Fritts, Pierce, Shroder and Sterne; Messrs. Rapp and Thomas. As guests we were accompanied by Miss Muriel Bastin and Miss Anne S. Culbertson. Twelve members and two guests.

C. R. THOMAS.

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## AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

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